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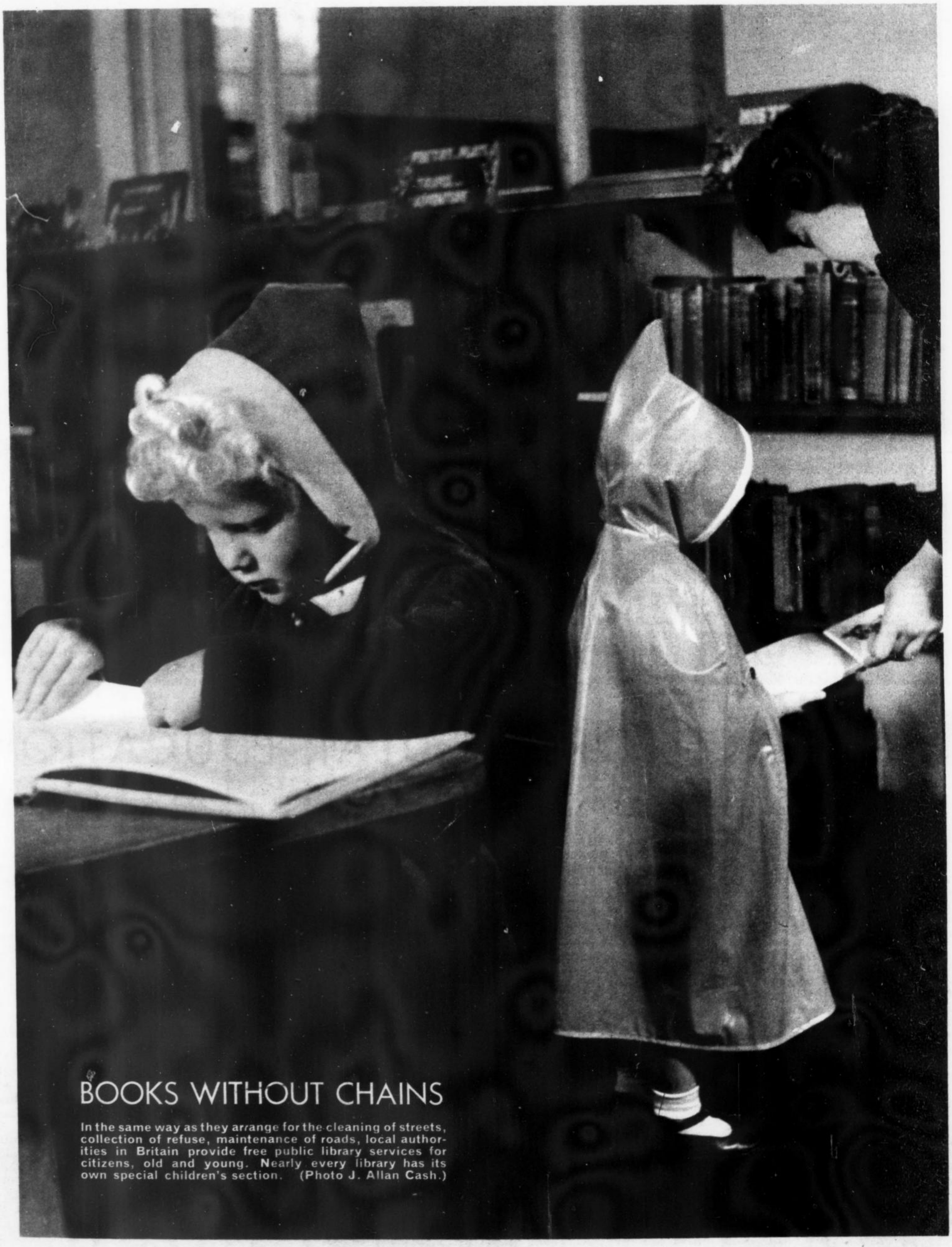

BOOKS WITHOUT CHAINS

In the same way as they arrange for the cleaning of streets, collection of refuse, maintenance of roads, local authorities in Britain provide free public library services for citizens, old and young. Nearly every library has its own special children's section. (Photo J. Allan Cash.)

Courier

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THE PUBLIC LIBRARY...

PROBABLY for most of us books and magazines are such a common part of our lives that we have lost all sense of wonder that we should have daily in our hands one of the most amazing tools invented by civilized man for his service. We cannot easily stand back and see in perspective all the varied contributions which books make to our enjoyment, our daily business, our scientific and cultural advancement and our education —nor is it easy, even for Unesco which has a duty to do this, to understand all the problems which the making and distribution of books pose to the modern world.

If we are lucky enough to live in one of the countries where books are abundant, it is difficult to realize that in most countries there is still a book famine, particularly at the two extremes of book use, by children in schools and by the scientists in their research stations and laboratories.

If we live in these famine areas it is equally hard to understand that in many countries the most difficult problems come not from scarcity of books but from their abundance. In these places the daily problem for the scientist, particularly, is not to find something to read but to find exactly what he needs in the bewildering mass of scientific literature.

*

To meet both the problems of scarcity and abundance, one of the simplest, most ingenious and most universally useful of all social institutions, the library, has been invented. Many thousands of years ago, libraries were made, obviously enough, to meet only a problem of scarcity. They were the strongly defended fortresses of recorded knowledge and even now this characteristic of a great historical library still survives.

But ever since the Renaissance, libraries and the users af libraries have been opening doors and windows, letting light into the dark storehouses, devising new techniques not to preserve only but to diffuse the knowledge hidden in the pages of their millions of books and periodicals.

New kinds of libraries have been created; popular libraries for ordinary men, women and children to give them free access to every kind of literature for entertainment, study and information, and scientific libraries with complex documentation services so that everything that a research worker wants can be instantaneously found for him however old or however new.

*

YET, despite the wide acceptance in theory of the importance of the public library for education and recreation, the fact is that almost nowhere in the world is adequate library service freely available to all the people.

In the United States, for example, a searching public library enquiry completed in 1950 showed that while 20,000,000 people were library card holders, 35,000,000 (or approximately one-fourth of the national population) were without library services of any kind. Even so, the United States is well-off for library service as compared to most other countries, with notable exceptions such as Denmark, Sweden and Great Britain.

If public libraries are essential in technically advanced countries, it seems that they would be a hundred times more necessary in under-developed regions where books and money to buy them are extremely scarce. In these regions many people are learning to read and write in vast programmes of fundamental education. What use is it to teach people to read if being literate they have nothing to read or only the strip cartoons and the trivial but dangerous trash that can be found even where there are no good books at all? Without libraries, it is likely that much of the good effect of mass education programmes will be only ephemeral.

Why are so many areas throughout the world without library service and why are the existing libraries so poor? The elements of the problem are not far to seek and are almost universally constant : (1) public apathy. Most of the people have never seen a library and consequently do not know what they are missing. (2) Inadequate financial support. In many countries public libraries have not yet found a place in the budgetary sun. (3) Lack of trained librarians and an association of librarians to promote library development. (4) A great shortage of publications in locally written languages so the average person can understand them.

No quick and easy solutions of these problems exist. However there is evidence that governments are becoming increasingly aware of the need for including public libraries in plans for educational development. The tremendous public response to demonstration projects in various places has revealed a great and unexpected latent demand for public library services which needs only to be awakened. Some librarians who can in turn train others are being developed in countries without library schools. A few have received fellowships for observation of library practices abroad, others are receiving on-the-job training in demonstration projects, and a fair number have participated in seminars and conferences.

Finally, large-scale efforts are being made in various parts of the world to teach people to read, and to produce publications which they can read. All of this adds up to something more than the proverbial drop in the bucket, but the pail is still far from full.

*

ANY government which plans to establish public library services fortunately has a century of experience at its disposal. A vast literature on the subject exists, and there are many specialists willing to help with advice. Consequently it is possible to avoid major mistakes. For one thing, it should be apparent that the creation of public libraries cannot be left entirely to local initiative. Needed are national and regional plans, national and state library legislation and a system of grants-in-aid to local units. All of this clearly requires a fair amount of money, and it is hardly likely that libraries will be constructed for a whole country at once. However once a nation-wide plan is drafted, a start can be made with one unit designed to allow for gradual extension of library services in the future.

... A FORCE FOR POPULAR EDUCATION

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has been created by the will of 46 countries. Its aim is to promote peace, and social and spiritual welfare by working through the minds of men. The creative power of Unesco is the force of knowledge and international understanding.

This manifesto, by describing the potentialities of the public library, proclaims Unesco's belief in the public library as a living force for popular education and for the growth of international understanding, and thereby for the promotion of peace.

A democratic agency

The public library is a product of modern democracy and a practical demonstration of democracy's faith in universal education as a life-long process. Though primarily intended to serve the educational needs of adults, the public library should also supplement the work of the schools in developing the reading tastes of children and young people, helping them to become adults who can use books with appreciation and profit. As a democratic institution, operated by the people for the people, the public library should be:

Established and maintained under clear authority of law.

Supported wholly or mainly from public funds.

Open for free use on equal terms to all members of the community, regardless of occupation, creed, class or race.

The complete public library should provide—books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, maps, pictures, films, music scores and recordings—and give guidance in their use. The public library should offer children, young people. men and women opportunity and encouragement:

To educate themselves continuously.

To keep abreast of progress in all fields of knowledge.

To maintain freedom of expression and a constructively critical attitude toward all public issues.

To be better social and political citizens of their country and of the world.

To be more efficient in their day-to-day activities.

To develop their creative capacities and powers of appreciation in arts and letters.

To aid generally in the advancement of knowledge.

To use their leisure time to promote personal happiness and social well-being.

The people's university

The public library should be active and positive in its policy and a dynamic part of community life. It should not tell people what to think, but it should help them decide what to think about. The spotlight should be thrown on significant issues by exhibitions, booklists, discussions, lectures, courses, films and individual reading guidance. Reading interest should be stimulated and the library's services publicized through a well-planned continuous public relations programme. The public library should link its activities with the work of other educational, cultural and social agencies—the schools, universities, museums, labour unions, study clubs, adult education groups, etc. It should also co-operate with other libraries in the loan of publications and with library associations for the advancement of public librarianship. The books in the library should be made accessible on open shelves and by use of efficient technical processes; and the library's services should be brought close to the homes and work places of the people by means of branches and mobile units.

With a well-trained, resourceful and imaginative staff, and adequate budget and public support, a public library can become what it should be—a university of the people offering a liberal education to all comers. Citizens of a democracy have need of such opportunities for self-education at all times. The complexity and instability of life today make the need an urgent one.

Excavations of ancient cities in Egypt have uncovered some of the early temple and palace libraries dating back some 2000 years B.C. In the ruins of Karnak Temple at Thebes archeologists found an inscription for a "House of Books". At Idfu, 50 miles away, a well-preserved library building was uncovered which was known as "The House of Papyrus". A catalogue inscribed on a stone wall of the building reveals that the library contained books on religion, hunting, astrology, astronomy and many other subjects. Here, Egyptian scribes are seen writing on papyrus during the 17th century B.C. (Photo Florence Archeological Museum.)

BOOKS WITHOUT CHAINS

THE STORY OF LIBRARIES

By *Francis L. Kent,* Head, Unesco Library,

SINCE man first set down his thoughts in writing—on clay tablets or papyrus, on bamboo or silk scrolls—he has sought to collect and preserve his writings for posterity. The idea of a library must be almost as old as civilization itself, and the story of libraries is the story of thought and knowledge recorded, preserved and made available for use.

It was in Western Asia and Egypt that man first learned the art of writing. He seems first to have produced what we should now call documents or archives—such as laws and tribute lists—together with religious and magic texts and epic poems. Collections of such writings were stored in palaces and temples and formed the first libraries ; and since references have been found to official scribes in Egypt more than 6,000 years ago, we may safely conclude that there were libraries at that date. At Idfu, near Thebes, a well-preserved library building was found, with a catalogue cut into one of its stone walls. A Greek writer tells us that the library of King Osymandyas, dating perhaps from about 1300 B.C., was called "The Dispensary of the Soul".

The greatest of the ancient Mesopotamian libraries was that of King Assurbanipal at Nineveh, dating from about 650 B.C., where some 30,000 clay tablets were discovered by Sir Henry Layard in 1850. Some of these bear marks of ownership, or classification or arrangement indications, and the library is believed to have been thrown open for the general use of the King's subjects. This collection is now in the British Museum in London and is our most valuable source of information about the civilizations of Mesopotamia.

No ancient people loved learning more than the Greeks. Aristotle had a large collection of books which served as a sort of university library for his school of philosophy ; and it was one of the students of this school who, as a political refugee from Athens, influenced and helped King Ptolemy I of Egypt to found the most famous of all the libraries of antiquity—that of Alexandria.

The Alexandrine library rapidly became the centre of a continuing Greek tradition, and is said to have contained at one time 700,000 volumes—a figure we need not perhaps take too seriously. It is indeed ironical that Julius Caesar, who is himself credited with planning the establishment of public libraries in Rome, was responsible for its partial destruction during the fighting in Egypt in 47 B. C. In the declining years of the Roman Empire all libraries in Roman territory, including what remained of the Alexandrine library, were closed by the Emperor Theodosius and their contents destroyed or scattered.

Let us here leave the Western world, at a point in history when culture must indeed have seemed to have disappeared for ever, and look for a moment at the libraries of China. An imperial library existed at the time of the Chou dynasty (1122-256 B.C.); but the so-called "First Emperor", in 221 B.C., decreed that all books save those on magic, medicine and agriculture should be burnt, and himself took charge of the work of censorship. Many treasures of learning, including the work of Confucius, were preserved only through concealment, and it was a hundred years before Hsiao Wu re-established libraries and began to collect and transcribe the surviving masterpieces of Chinese literature.

During the Sung Yuan and Ming dynasties (960-1644) some of the imperial libraries were opened to students. Like the early libraries of India, Japan and other Asiatic countries, those of China are especially noteworthy for their magnificent collections of philosophical, religious and literary manuscripts, many of which are even now only partially known to Western scholars.

In the West, the gap left by the complete cessation of all Greek and Roman culture at the end of the fourth century was gradually and at first unobtrusively filled by a rising power — the Christian church, interested much in theology but little in the classics, toiling in the monasteries amid a world of turmoil to produce for the glory of God and the enlightenment of man the illuminated manuscript Bible, liturgical book or treatise on ecclesiastical law.

We owe the monastic library to St. Benedict, who in the sixth century enjoined reading and study upon his monks, and to monastic libraries we owe many features of library administration as we know it to-day. The Carthusians and Cistercians even had a system of loans. Intellectual horizons began again to widen, and contacts between man and man to increase.

From the monk in his cell to the early collegiate or university library, usually a large room with separate small compartments or bays, was a slow but easy transition. First, the books chained to the shelves and the readers sitting facing them; then, the books unchained and the readers taking them to desks set in the bays, with some kind of central corridor giving access to all bays—an arrangement still much used in modern libraries, since it places the maximum number of readers close to the books they require and at the same time affords a degree of privacy and quiet.

And at this point, about the middle of the fifteenth century, occurred one of the great miracles of history. In the course of military operations by the Turks, the last Byzantine Emperor

(Continued on next page.)

"SOME LIBRARIANS TRY HARD TO BE GOOD CUSTODIANS OF BOOKS; A FEW UNFORTUNATELY SUCCEED"

(Continued from previous page)

met his death at Constantinople in 1453, when the city was captured. The resulting migration of scholars and students westwards towards Rome recalls the migration of a former generation of scholars to Alexandria. But in this second Renaissance there was a difference.

Within a year or two of the fall of Constantinople, there was discovered far off in the Rhineland the art of printing, one of the most revolutionary inventions of all time. How, without printing and the almost equally miraculous discovery in Europe at about the same time of the craft of paper-making, already long known in Asia, could the vast intellectual potential of the European monasteries and universities and of the migrating scholars from the East have found expression and achieved synthesis? Even scribes turned printers to cope with the flood of work — the English Caxton among them. And the revival of Greek and Roman learning, with all the philosophical and scientific advances which it inspired, had a profound effect on libraries.

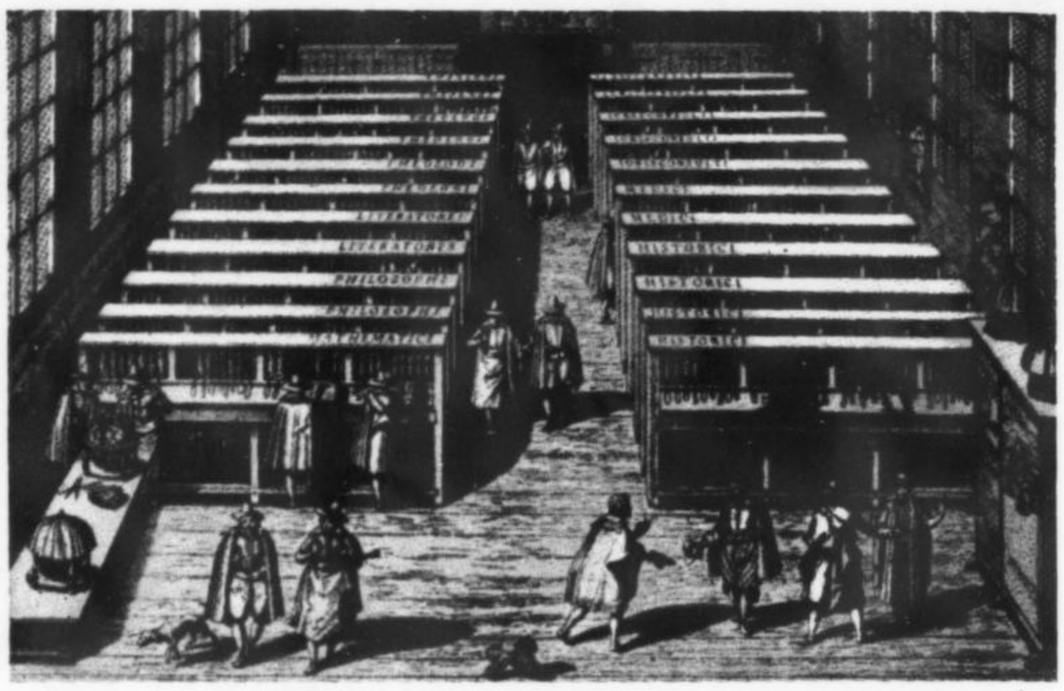
The mediaeval arrangement of a library in bays was now felt to be insufficiently expressive of the universality of knowledge, and new libraries began to be built of which the principal feature was a large general reading hall with book-cases round the walls and readers' desks in the middle. The first of these was the Royal Library in the Escorial near Madrid, built in 1584; it was the forerunner of the reading rooms of the Vatican in Rome, the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris, and, by a further development, the great circular rooms of the British Museum in London and the Library of Congress in Washington.

Some of these libraries, with their high rooms, book-lined to the cornice, are quite incredibly inconvenient from the modern point of view, and many have risked their necks on wavering ladders only to find the wanted book still just out of reach — but they were of the very spirit of the Renaissance: classical and not Gothic, comprehensive and not divided into separate compartments. The only really continuous thread connecting the intellectual life of ancient Rome, the mediaeval Church and the Renaissance was, of course, the Latin language.

For four centuries from the Renaissance, libraries grew and multiplied rapidly, and the great libraries of the modern world began to take their present shape. Various forms of copyright law ensured the growth of their collections, and if access to some was restricted, they were in general open to all students.

There was one more great change still to come, and it was that which was brought about by the extension of education, with its related demand for "recreational" reading available for all. Authorities may still be trying to settle whether England or the United States of America possessed the first modern public library; what is undeniably true is that the public library movement began in both countries about 1850, and has been spreading to almost every country in the world ever since.

The public library movement was an old idea in a new form. As we have seen, the library of King Assurbanipal at Nineveh was probably open to the public, and there were certainly public libraries in ancient Rome. A number of town or communal libraries, open to all who could read, arose in various countries soon after the Renaissance, while the contents of many others were thrown open to public use in consequence of the great European revolutionary movements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries — even though it frequently happened that no provision was subsequently made for their upkeep.



To prevent theft, the old libraries used to chain the books to the cases. This old print shows the famous Dutch library of the University of Leyden, founded in 1575. It soon became one of the foremost universities of Europe.

But the modern movement is based on several new assumptions. Firstly, the present-day public library is in general supported from national or local taxes specially set aside for its upkeep; secondly, it acts on the supposition that all citizens of all ages, in all walks of life, either can read or are being taught to do so. From this has followed a new conception of the function of the librarian, who is no longer a "keeper", restrictive in outlook and fearful of losses, but a man actively concerned to get the right book to the right reader at the right time — a man who takes delight in seeing his shelves half-empty because he knows his books are well and frequently used.

As one librarian recently put it, "Some librarians try hard to be good custodians of books; a few of them unfortunately succeed."

Moreover, the librarian no longer contents himself with supplying what is asked for; he now strives to anticipate demands and even to create them. Not only do books go out for home reading from libraries in the large towns; there are also rural libraries, libraries carried by motor vehicle or on horseback to remote villages or sent by train or air in boxes; there are libraries in hospitals, schools and prisons, there are libraries distributed by boat to seamen.

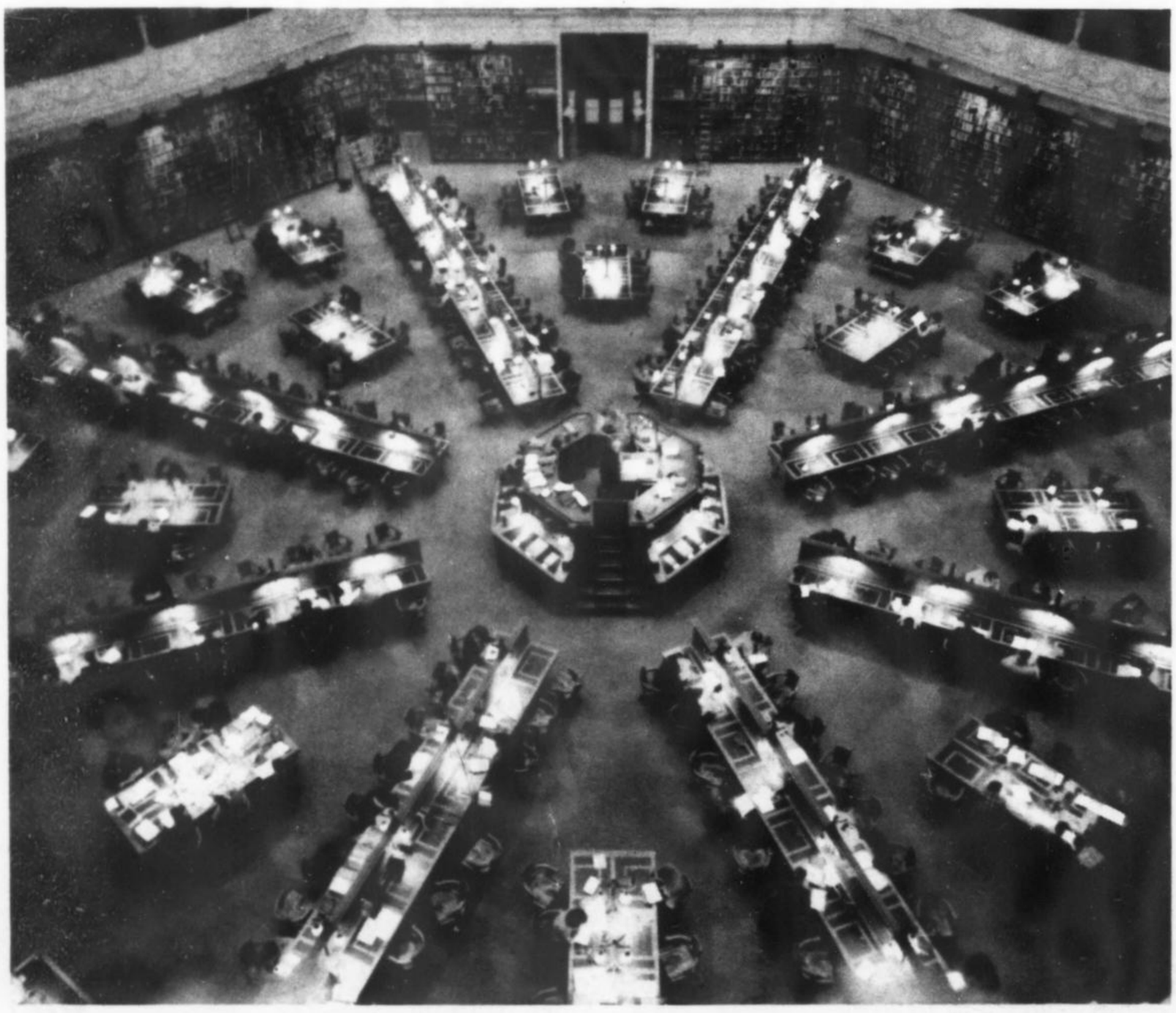
And with all this has come a growing awareness of the essential unity of librarianship. In many countries the popular libraries have stimulated a demand among their own readers for books for study as well as for recreation, and inter-library loan systems have arisen to make the best possible use of available resources. In these systems the learned libraries too have played a most important part, and it is no uncommon thing for a library van to call at a remote farm bringing a book on veterinary science, borrowed perhaps from some university, for the farmer, a book on some aspect of household management for his wife, and fiction, magazines or other reading matter for both the grown-ups and the children. The ideal inter-library loan system would provide any book on any subject for anyone at any place and at any time — and some systems are not far from achieving this ideal.

As long ago as 1877 Dr. Poole, librarian of the Chicago Public Library, said that he could see no more valid reason for excluding children from a library than from a church. Forty years earlier, indeed, a juvenile library had been established at West Cambridge, Massachusetts, but the children's library movement really dates from about 1900, when children's sections began to be considered as normal as reference and loan collections.

Some of the more modern children's rooms, attractively decorated and with small tables and chairs, under the supervision of a specially trained assistant, are most inviting and have met with well-deserved success. The underlying value of the children's library resides in the opportunities it gives for early lessons in good citizenship, care of public property and independent thought and judgment. The library becomes part of each citizen's heritage from childhood onwards.

The latest chapters in this long history concern such developments as film and gramophone record libraries, and improvements in library techniques. Even the use of automatic machinery for library purposes is being studied. But all take their place within the main framework of service to the community — a service which has now become international, not merely local or national, and is one of the most potent forces for international understanding in the world to-day.

The Melbourne Public Library in Australia is regarded by experts as being in the highest world class. With more than 600,000 books, it provides information on all subjects required by research students and business men. This picture of the reading room was taken from one of the galleries on the fourth floor of the library. (Australian Official Photo.)



MORE BOOKS FOR AFRICANS

NEXT month at the University College in Ibaden, Nigeria, a group of educators and librarians from all parts of Africa will meet to chart a course in an experiment to satisfy African demand that literates get a better chance to find the books they need. The seminar, organized under the auspices of Unesco, will focus discussion on getting more public library services to African rural areas on a regional or national scale... It will treat such questions as the expansion of mobile library units for the "hinterland", the use of films and other audio-visual techniques in mass education campaigns, and the steps to be taken for the professional training of a greater number of librarians.

The problems in British West Africa, discussed in the article below, are typical of those in many parts of Africa, where library development has followed a historic pattern—reading rooms begun by private or semi-official bodies expand into a library system and then become an accepted responsibility of government.

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LIBRARY service began in the four West African capitals in the early 1940's, under the direction of British Council representatives. European librarians were appointed for the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and Africans were trained to help them or replace them.

In ten years the service in the Gold Coast has come of age and is independent of the Council, despite all the initial difficulties : for example, the acute shortage of books in the early years.

Certain things became clear quickly in the Gold Coast. For one thing, the main difficulty for a large and underdeveloped area is the selection of books. There are insufficient books of the right type published. Although the borrowers are adult and often require books on advanced subjects, these must be simply written to be readily understood. There are few books written in the West African vernaculars, so English—a foreign language to the majority of the population—has to be learned before books can be readily used.

Books go to the people

ONE other fact became clear from the very beginning. Most of the Africans using the library services concentrated on reading for examinations. There was very little reading for pleasure, and yet the library was not designed solely to provide textbooks. This is being offset by the provision of books for children who are being taught the delight and pleasure to be found in literature.

Then again, there is a question of helping people to pick books to read. This is not so difficult when the people come to the library itself. The staff is always on hand to help and advise.

But in the ninety-three thousand square miles of the Gold Coast, this is not always the answer. There are two other methods of bringing book and reader together. One is the book box system where a box of some fifty books is made available to schools, colleges, community and social centres, and hospitals. Each box has a shelf inside and when stood on end it can be used as a small book case. Today, some ten thousand volumes are on issue through this service.

The third approach is that of bringing the library to the people when they cannot come to the library.

The motorised librarian

A TRAVELLING library was designed and put on the road. It consisted of a truck which contained shelves on the outside so that when the van was opened up twenty or more people could stand around choosing books.

The van holds about one thousand volumes and the interior is used for carrying fuel and camp equipment. As an added protection against rain, a hood-cloth was fixed to let down over the lockers.

The van enables a selection of the library's stock to be sent around the country, and as often as possible the librarian travels with it. In this way, he is able to advise readers on their choice of books. This system has the added advantage that the personal contact between the librarian and the reading public makes the borrowers more ready to ask for help. Advice and help are also given in connection with the building up of book stocks in school libraries, methods of dealing with bookworm and simple library practice.

The library also offers service to school teachers. Books on teaching methods and allied subjects are provided gratis and post free to bona fide teachers. This service was made available when the library of the Education Department was taken over. As often as possible, personal contact is made with the teachers, and whenever the library van is on trek schools are invited.

Plans are under way for building regional libraries in various parts of the Gold Coast. As each of these is opened, a library van will be attached to it, thus decentralizing the book box scheme and making visits to the surrounding districts more frequent. The Regional Library will be begun by a European, but it is hoped that at the end of a year one of the African staff will be able to take over.

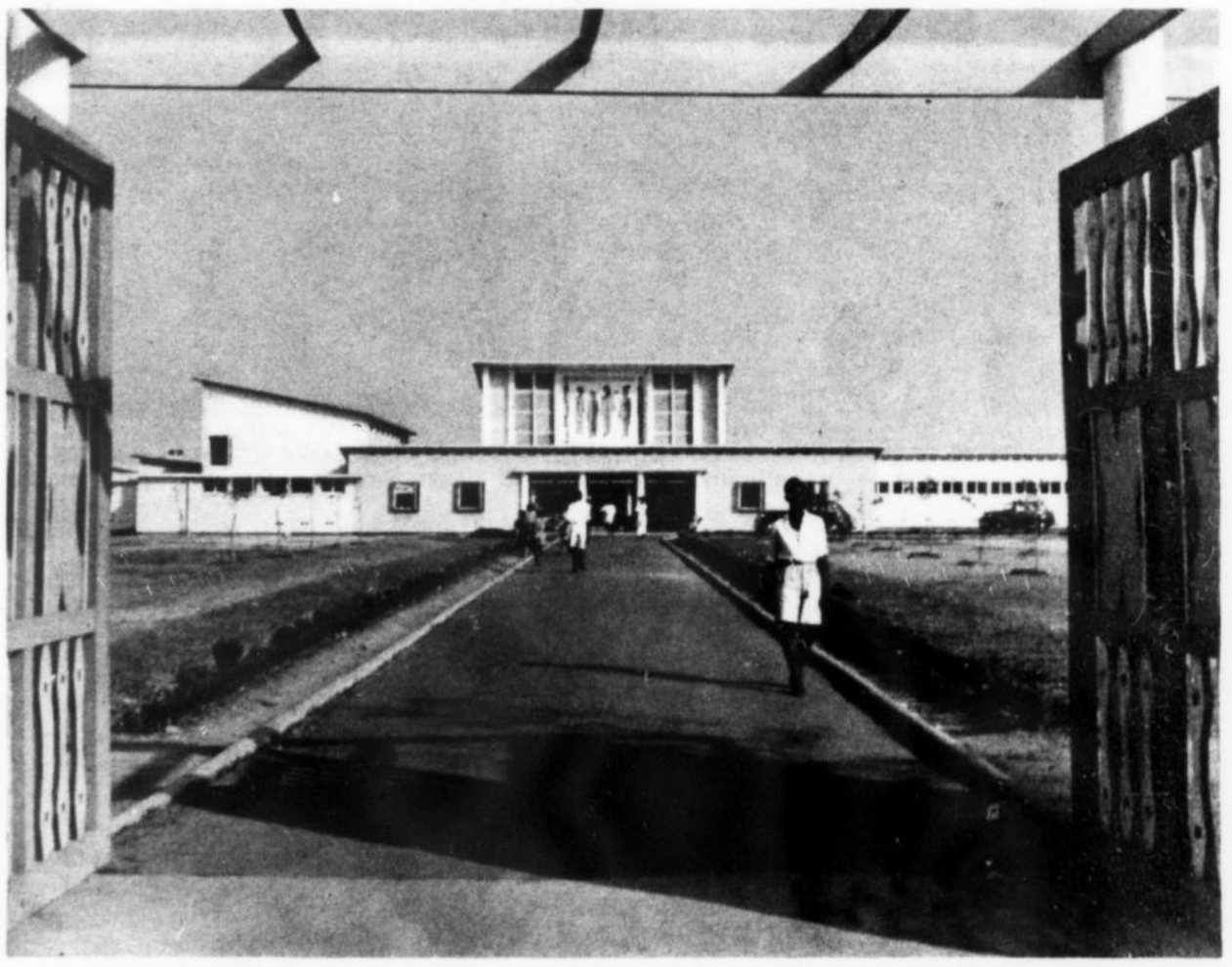
* * *

— The first duty of a public library is to serve the people; the second duty has not yet been discovered.

★ ★ ★

— Life being very short, and the quiet hours of it few, we ought to waste none of them in reading valueless books; and valuable books should be within the reach of every one. — John Ruskin.

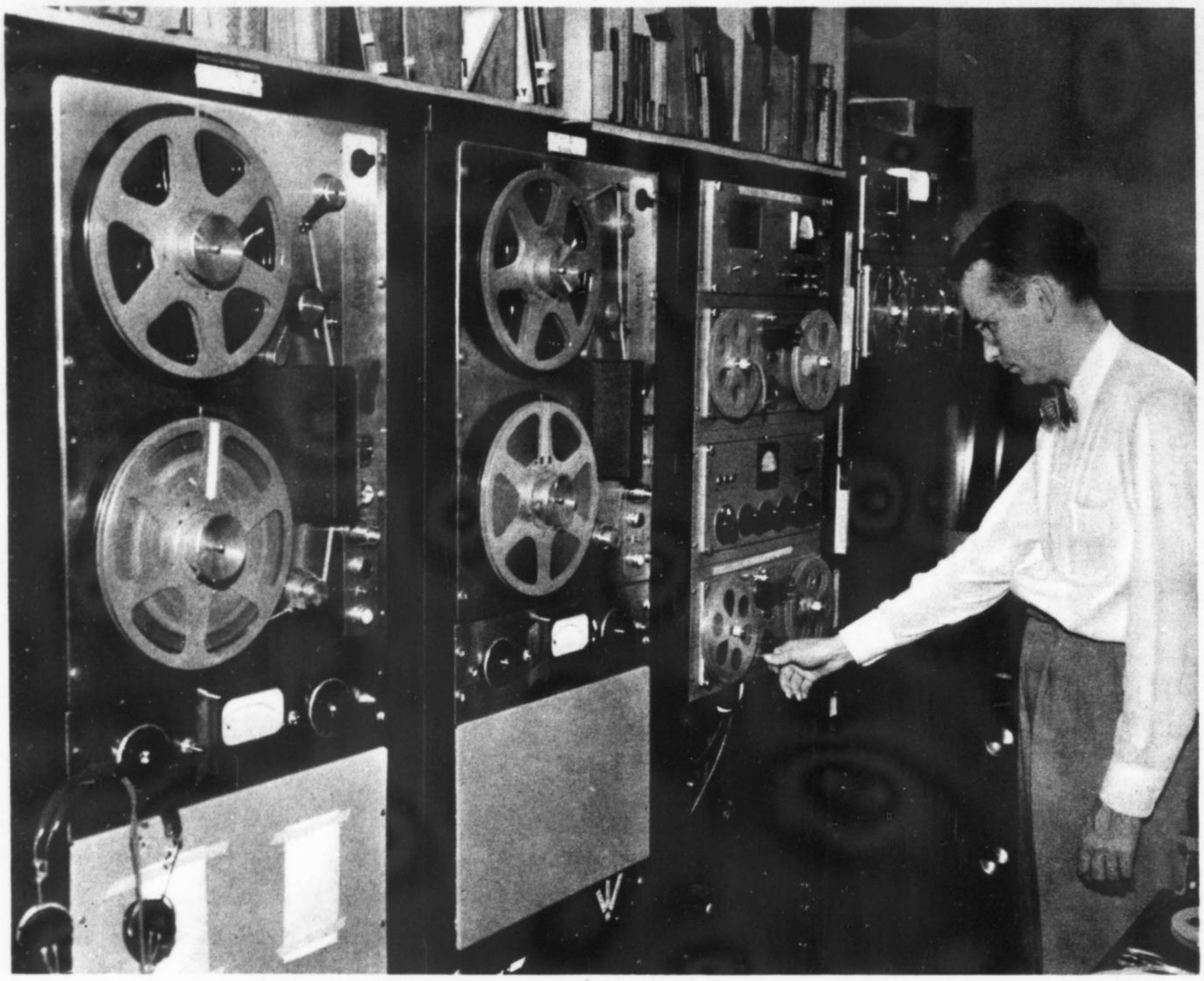
Three young librarians from the Gold Coast proudly examine the librarian certificates which they have just received. West Africans are being trained as librarians to help or replace Europeans.



New community centre at Accra, Gold Coast, offers recreation, mass education and library facilities for young and old. Book boxes bring reading material to village centres.

Mass education movement is spreading rapidly through West Africa. This reading chart has been placed in the village square for all to see. (Photos : Crown Copyright Reserved)

THEY PUSHED OUT THE WALLS



Equipment in control room of radio station run by Louisville Library. Fourteen hours a day it offers good music, condensed versions of books and plays, significant speeches and open forums and other programmes for the enjoyment and enlightenment of listeners.

by Karl Detzer

A LOUISVILLE, Kentucky, housewife one day last spring finished an afternoon's shopping, then hurried into her city's astounding Free Public Library. Inside the door she dropped her bundles into a wire basket on wheels, pushed it to the reservations desk, and announced : "I want a framed picture for my living room."

She was told that there were few to choose from; most of the 100 originals and fine reproductions in the library's gallery were already out on loan. But she did find a water colour by a Kentucky artist, which she decided would be just right for her wall. A librarian stamped her card, and the picture was hers for a month free.

Next she said she'd like to hear some Beethoven. Through earphones she listened to passages from a dozen records, at last borrowed five for a week—also on her library card. At the book desk she picked up a light novel and a heavy volume on race relations—one of the subjects most in demand in Louisville—then hurried downstairs to a darkened room where a score of other taxpayers were enjoying television, another free library service. On her way she put a nickel into a dispensing machine for a soft drink which she sipped while she rested her feet and watched the show.

Not for long, however. It was nearly five o'clock and she had to get home. There at home, along with thousands of other Louisville citizens, she would tune her FM radio to Station WFPL to hear the Chicago Round Table, followed by a half hour of Mexican folk songs and another thirty minutes of Brahms. This radio station, a 250-watt transmitter, is run by the library from studios in the basement of the main library building.

THE public schools give a helping hand, too, and use it as one of the city's most versatile educational tools. Fourteen hours a day it broadcasts good music, significant speeches, open forums, condensed versions of current books and plays, and transcriptions of the best network shows—each of the latter by special permission from the networks—and it also transmits hundreds of other programmes each week over a citywide system of leased telephone wires.

These lines connect the library with all Louisville's junior and senior high schools, such parochial schools as want them, the municipal university, the school for the blind, children's wards in the hospitals, the city's psychopathic ward, and all branch libraries. Each of the thirty-five outlets can get any programme it desires at any hour of the day merely by asking for it. The library's collection of recordings, although less than five years old, now numbers thousands of records and wire- and tape-recordings, including opera, folk songs, symphonies, language lessons, poetry, Broadway plays, aud transcriptions of network programmes.

Teachers need only call the library to bring into their classrooms exciting radio programmes on whatever subject their pupils are studying. Sitting at their desks the youngsters explore with Marco Polo, ride the Oregon Trail, gallop with Paul Revere, hunt birds with Audubon, or float down the Mississippi with Huckleberry Finn. They hear masterpieces of prose and poetry read by famous actors. They hear, too, the actual voices of Jane Addams, Amelia Earhart, Woodrow Wilson, Marconi, Edison, and many others.

Schools, clubs, or just plain citizens may borrow from their library's impressive collection of 550 motion-picture films. Last summer a neighbourhood grocer who was worried about idle youngsters on the streets borrowed a film from the library, set up a screen and a soundbox in the vacant lot beside his store. Each evening fifty to one hundred and fifty children sat on the ground, got excellent free movie fare, stayed off the streets. And in three years 3,000 adults were enrolled in the library's "neighbourhood universities", with classes held four evenings a week in four branch libraries. Professors from the municipal university teach subjects which range from music appreciation to the natural sciences. Instruction is free except for students working on college credits.

Of course the library also has books—half a million of them. In two years their circulation has risen 40 per cent, in spite of television, from 1,200,000 to 1,760,000 a year. The "transaction cost"—the cost of lending a book, film, picture, or recording—is slightly under ten cents compared with a national average of twenty-five cents. Louisville has done this by streamlining methods and introducing business-like techniques. Cost of all the library's extra services, including radio, all salaries, purchases of films and records, and rental of leased wires, was $47,541—about twelve cents for each of the city's 386,000 inhabitants.

BEHIND the plan to take the library to the people who pay for it are two energetic 46-year-old officials known to most of their fellow citizens as Skip and Charlie. Skip is Public Librarian Clarence Reginald Graham, who, depending on his mood, can talk like a philosophy professor, an evangelist, or an irate teamster. Charlie is Mayor Charles F. Farnsley, a big, blond man equally at home in a rough-and-tumble argument on garbage collections or a discussion of Chinese culture. Both are native sons. It was Farnsley who started it all. Graham makes it tick.

The library has a checkered past. A group of citizens more than seventy-five years ago decided that the town needed a library that was free. They bought a collection of books, lent them at no cost, and supported the project with a lottery; eventually they bought a big business block in the middle of town where the library was housed until forty-five years ago. Then Andrew Carnegie gave a building which the institution still occupies, and the original quarters were leased to a department store—the rentals paying a large part of the annual expense. The library still is not city-owned; the board of trustees, appointed by the mayor and city council, holds the title as a non-profit corporation. About twenty-five years ago Louisville built a bridge across the Ohio River, bonded the city to pay for it by charging tolls. Under a law passed at that time any money left over in the toll fund after the bonds were retired could be spent by the mayor as he saw fit.

Farnsley happened to be mayor five years ago when the last bond was paid—and he found $50,000 left over. He had served on the library's board of trustees, knew the institution's need for cash. Many department heads at the City Hall came forward with ideas about how to use the money—to improve everything from parks to parking lots. But Farnsley walked

Louisville Orchestra plays in a concert-lecture series offered by city's library.

Patients at children's hospital view films furnished by the Free Public Library.

into the office of startled Librarian Graham, laid a cheque for $50,000 on the desk.

"Here's some money, Skip," he said. "Tear down the walls. Take the library out to the people."

It was not the first time in Farnsley's regime that the library had broken with tradition. The free library had been free only to white citizens. After he became mayor Farnsley and the board quickly agreed that the "White Only" signs must come down. There were some dissenting rumblings but now Negroes and Whites use the library together in perfect amity.

The radio transmitter itself costs Louisville only $5,000. The station is one of the world's busiest, for in addition to the programmes that go on the air as many as twelve may be going out over the leased wires. Because the operating budget is small only a handful of employees man the intricate network. There are times when a single young operator-announcer-engineer—a girl, at that—juggles all twelve programmes running simultaneously.

But WFPL gives the people what they want, whether it's a dissertation on flower culture, or a symphony orchestra. The listener-owner is assured of one thing. He can turn on his radio without being assailed by jazz, by give-away shows, by commercials. Over the leased wires special music is piped twelve hours a day to the city's psychopathic ward, music chosen by the doctors for its soothing effect.

In the schools teachers build their classes around the programmes. Thus, when a history class is probing the American Civil War the teacher divides the time between textbooks and radio. The youngsters hear a dramatization of the life of John Brown, which points up the stresses that led to the war. They hear Henry Fonda as "Young Mr. Lincoln" and Raymond Massey as Sherwood's "Lincoln in Illinois". Excitement mounts as the children hear the firing of the first gun at Fort Sumter, then the battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* described by professional radio announcers in the present tense as if by actual observers. Classes sit on the sidelines at Bull Run and Appomatox. They hear the murmur of the crowd as Lincoln talks at Gettysburg, are present in Ford's Theatre on the dreadful night when the shots rang out and the President slumped in his box. They ride with the pursuers of assassin John Wilkes Booth, are in on the capture.

No matter what the topic—the coronation of Charlemagne, the discovery of oil in Texas, or a historic session at the United Nations—it's in the library in dramatic form waiting to live again in any classroom that needs it. Sixteen public school teachers form the "evaluation committee" which picks the recordings for school use, prepares the printed material for classroom use with the records—a summer-long job. Department heads at the municipal university serve as consultants. Local radio stations give technical advice when needed.

Supermarket carts are placed at convenience of library users for carrying books, gramophone records, magazines, pamphlets and paintings. (Photos on this page copyright " Courier-Journal and Louisville Times ".)

TELEVISION in the libraries caused several of Louisville's cultural eyebrows to lift sharply. Statistics prove that in each branch the advent of television stepped up book borrowing. It's easy to stop at the desk after watching a free show and pick up a book to take home. When a local educator complained about the cultural level of the average television. programme Mayor Farnsley quickly replied : "I'd rather the people came to their corner branch libraries to watch the shows than go to the corner saloons. Women can take their kids and their knitting there, have a good time—without having to buy a drink."

Farnsley backs Graham in his efforts to distribute the services of the library in ever-widening circles, often prods him to step up the process. It was he who talked the Art League into turning over its fine collection to the library for distribution to Louisville's living rooms. Art dealers greeted the innovation coldly but soon found that it paid off in dollars and cents. When a citizen after living with a picture for a month decides that he'd like to live with it always Librarian Graham puts him in touch with a local dealer, arranges a pay-as-you-go plan.

Mayor Farnsley recently walked into the librarian's office, brandished his card, and challenged, "Skip—try putting this thing into your wallet ! See, it can't be done. Fits into a woman's handbag—but don't you want men to borrow books too?" Graham quickly agreed. Hereafter Louisville's library cards will be convenient wallet size.

Thus in big and little innovations the librarian and the mayor have "pushed out the walls" and taken books, music, art, and education to the people. Graham, who several years ago was president of the American Library Association, stated his credo in a message to that organization. "The librarian," he said, "must not only be a scholar and educator, he must be a shrewd advertiser of his library's goods. He must buy his materials, display them, and promote them with all the skill of a salesman."

That may be heresy in some library quarters, but in Louisville it's working out fine.

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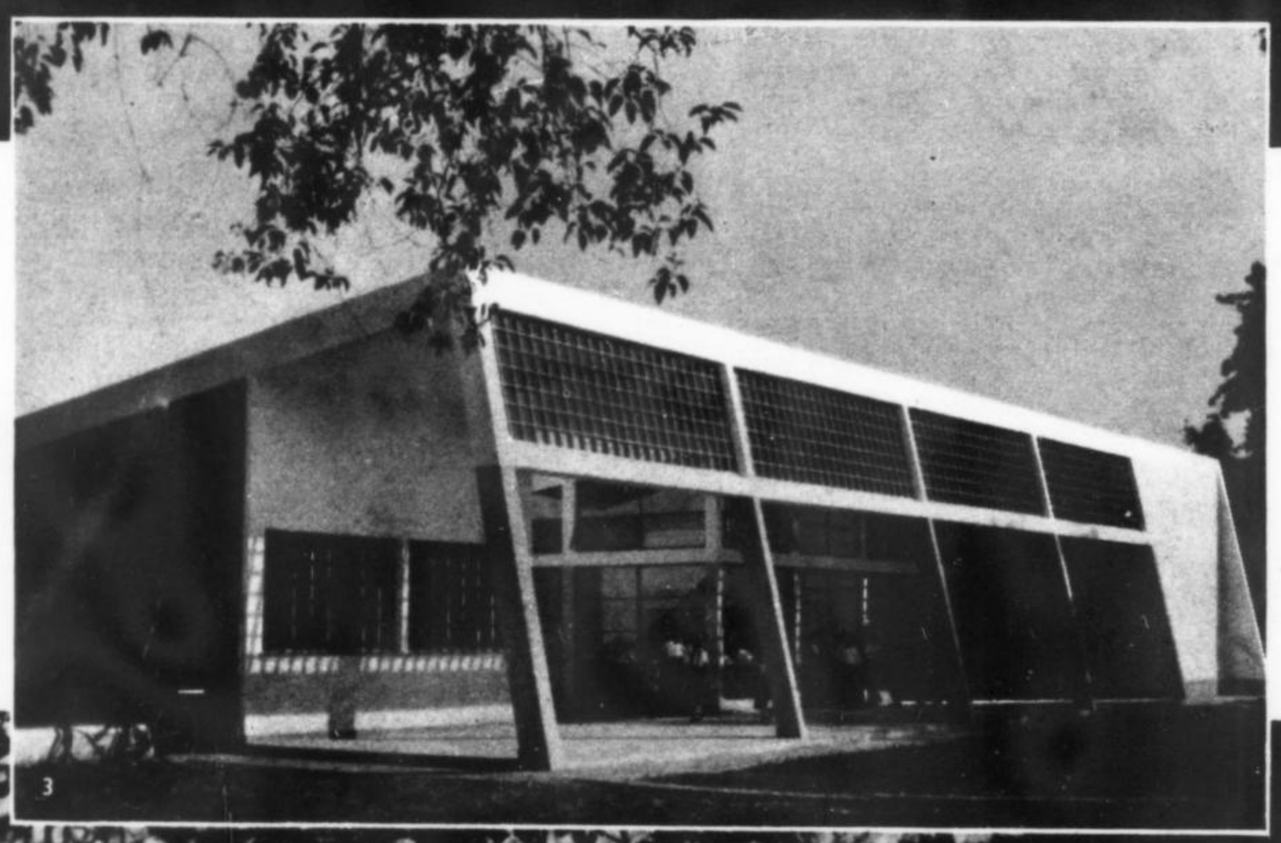

The main Children's Library of Sao Paulo, the most modern in Latin America, is housed in a magnificent structure of 20th century design ❶ It is provided with an open-air reading terrace, a cinema, a conference hall, reference and lending sections, a dining room, and special departments where children can paint, sculpt or model, listen to gramophone records, dance and play games. It also has a coin and stamp room, and a Braille section with some 400 books for blind boys and girls. A Children's Theatre ❷ built alongside the library and seating 700 persons was opened last September. Children participate in many of the plays and puppet shows produced. Five new branch libraries, of a total of 20 planned, have recently been constructed in various workers' sections of Sao Paulo. The Children's Library Branch of the Santo Amaro district ❸ was inaugurated on January 25, 1953. It offers all the facilities of the main library except the separate Children's Theatre.

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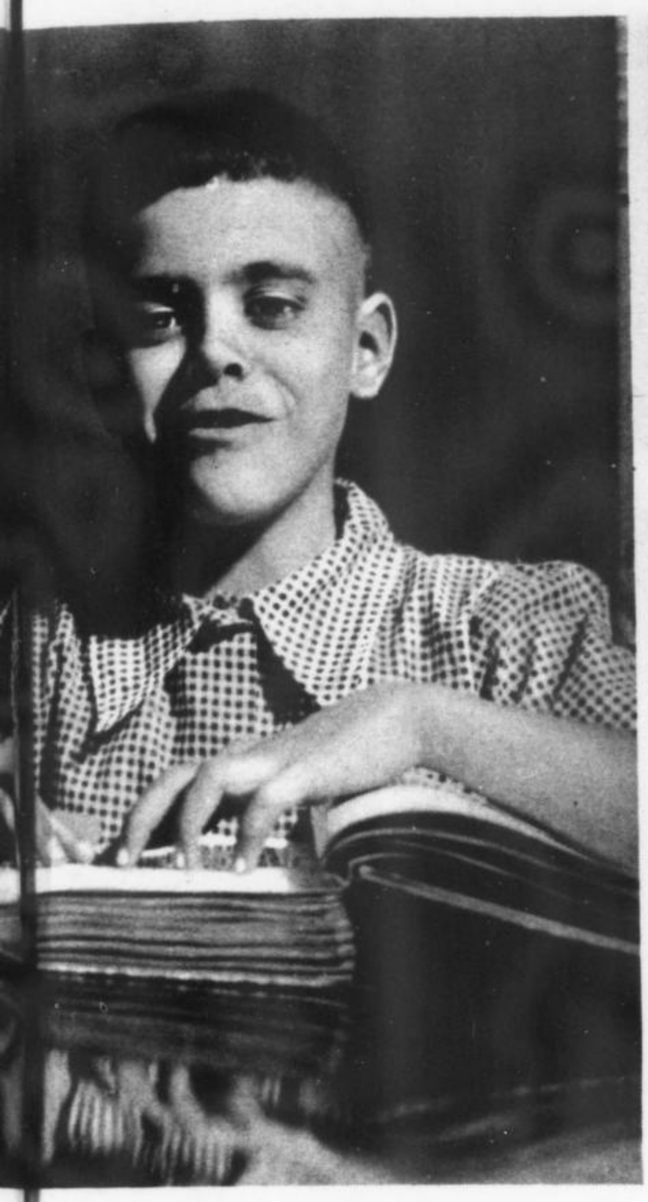


ille books to read—this one feels interesting.

A typical Brazilian dance organized in one of the five Children's Branch Libraries set up in the City of Sao Paulo.

BLIOTECA INFANTIL: A PARADISE FOR SAO PAULO'S CHILDREN

by S. M. KOFFLER

VEDNESDAY and Friday morning a special
crowded with shouting children, rolls
h the heart of the skyscraper city of Sao
Brazil, and heads for a little street—the
Jardim — in one of the densely populated
ions of town. At number 485 it pulls to a
n ultra ultra-modern two-storey building
eautifully laid out garden. From the bus,
children descend rapidly and impatiently
into what has been called "O Paraiso da
-Kiddies' Paradise.

Paradise—or *Biblioteca Infantil* as it is
wn—is no special institution just for the
the headquarters of one of the most
ovements in children's libraries created in
, in the whole of Latin America. The Sao
eca Infantil leads the way not only with
ption of architecture but with its advanced
ods and techniques, and the variety of
for development and expression it offers
ell as blind children.

er 35,000 children registered in the main
brary can choose from 30,000 books, or
lore or classical music, paint, learn puppet-
their own newspaper, go on excursions, or
r own plays in a huge children's theatre
lt for them last year.

h libraries, along similar lines, have been
ast two years in other parts of the city—all
districts—and a chain of 20 children's
ipped with open-air reading terraces, is
ity authorities. Similar children's libraries
are being built in other parts of the State of
d the movement is now spreading to other
e country as well.

ment owes much of its success to Dona
aroli, Director of the Children's Library
e City of Sao Paulo, who has devoted the
of her life to the growth and development
ibraries, not only as a place where children
ooks, but as a social centre, a delightful
f fun which young people can feel belongs
where they can learn the joys of reading
press their personality through the various
s.

w Zealand librarian who recently visited
Infantil on Rua Jardim remarked, "The
ion I received was that the children regard
more as a home than an official institution.
e they free access to all shelves and to the
they are also supplied with games (chess
ng cards, etc.). Twice a week there are
t which not only the library staff but also
children's writers and the children them-
active part. The children also issue their
library bulletin. There are weekly film
y and musical entertain-
xcursions to factories and
of interest to children.

(Continued on page 11.)

Which book shall I take home? The answer is not easy when the library has over 30,000 volumes from which to choose.

IN MUNICH PINOCCHIO AND BABAR ARE LANGUAGE TEACHERS

TODAY some of the oldest public libraries can look back on more than a century of service to the community. The children's library movement, however, dates back barely more than 50 years when recognition of the many services that a children's library can offer was marked by the opening of special children's corners in several of the world's libraries.

In this development the libraries of the United States played an important role, offering an example for other countries to follow. In 1911, after a visit to the children's room of the New York Public Library, a distinguished Danish author remarked : "I was prepared for everything else I have seen in America, but these children's libraries are amazing. They surprise and delight me... I should like to spend a long time in this beautiful room just reading in the company of children. It is to become a child again — a child with a new freedom."

Today the idea is commonly accepted and children's libraries have become an integral part of the library system, their development having gone hand in hand with the rapid expansion of branch libraries in the cities of many countries.

Many of the early ones were inspired by the American example. Thus, in 1911, after touring American libraries, Dr. Valfrid Palmgren founded the Children's Library of Stockholm, the first of its kind in Europe.

In Paris and Brussels, children's libraries under the name of *L'Heure Joyeuse* were equipped by Americans with assurance of maintenance by the municipalities. And in London in 1920, a children's library was created in the former home of Charles Dickens. A staff of boys and girls administered this service under the direction of a young American clergyman who had discovered this "Tiny Tim of a House", and had seen in it a children's library of unique possibilities.

Young in heart

SEPARATE buildings solely for the use of children are, however, still few even today. Of those that do exist probably one of the most unusual is the International Youth Library in Munich, Germany, which is dedicated to the task of "furthering sincere understanding among the young generations of the world through children's and youth books."

It might well use for its motto the idea expressed by Jean Cocteau, who once said that all adults must keep something of youth in their hearts for only in this way could they hope to understand their own children. To this the International Youth Library adds, "And only if the children of the world understand one another, can we hope for a peaceful and undivided world."

The idea of starting the Library came from Mrs. Jella Lepmann, who had organized an International Youth Book Exhibition in Germany in 1946-47.

Today, in the building on the Kaulbachstrasse in Munich, which was given and repaired by the Bavarian Government, there exists a remarkable collection of the world's "best youth books". Since 1949, when the library was opened, this collection has grown from 8,000 volumes, coming from 23 countries, to over 18,000, representing the gifts of publishers, official organizations, libraries, schools and individuals in 35 countries.

What does such a library offer ? In the first place it serves as a point of contact for libraries, schools and children in all parts of the world, and not only for German children and young people, but also for German schools, librarians, publishers and authors.

Within a year of its opening it had already been visited by classes from 40 different schools, and these included not only Germans, but Americans, English, French, Scandinavians, Italians and the children from displaced persons camps. These refugee children were always thrilled when they found books in their native languages there.

Children's paintings

BECAUSE of the accent laid on language teaching in their schools' curriculum, many German children are able to read books in English and French by the age of 12 and 13. So the Library organizes special study groups with the books it possesses... *Winnie the Pooh, Ferdinand the Bull, Pinocchio, Little Nils Holgerson and the Elephant Babar* become the language teachers of their nations. And, more important still, the children are not only learning the actual language, but something about the mentality of the different countries, about their way of life and thought.

Another outstanding activity has been the book discussion groups in which boys and girls aged from 11 to 17 years take part regularly. The guidance and evaluation of these discussions are in the hands of experienced librarians and other specialists.

Children's paintings, which speak an international language, are another special feature of the Library's work. The Library opened with an International Exhibition showing the work of children in 24 countries, which later toured many German and other European cities. Since then many schools have held monthly exhibitions in the Library, which has organized an active children's painting group.

The Library is also doing invaluable work in developing a basic international list of the world's best books for children and young people. In this connection it works with publishers, writers, illustrators and — most important of all — with the educators of the new generation. Specialists in all these fields — a total of 250 people from 9 countries, — met at the Library in 1951 to discuss how international understanding can be aided by children's books.

World pattern

WITH the help of scholarship and exchange funds which it is hoped will be established by all library associations, it can offer excellent exchange possibilities. During 1951, for the first time since its creation, foreign guest librarians from Sweden, England and Switzerland did practical work in the Munich Library. Their temporary co-operation helped it to supplement its collection from their countries and the visits enabled the librarians to study the Library methods and to consider how these could be applied in the libraries of their own countries. This also highlights the possibilities of using the International Youth Library to develop a basic pattern for similar centres throughout the world.

"Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" played by youngsters at the Children's Theatre annexed to the Sao Paulo **Biblioteca Infantil.**

The Story Hour comes twice a week. Well-known children's writers as well as the library staff and the children take an active part.

Some remarkable results have been achieved by the children of Sao Paulo in puppet making and in the production of puppet plays.

MORE CHILDREN'S WRITERS, BETTER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

(Continued from page 9.)

"There is a vertical file with pictures concerning history, geography, art and science, and also coin and stamp collections. Books in Braille for blind children are provided too. Among the youngsters one sees all kinds of races and nationalities, Negroes, Mulattoes, Japanese, Italian, English, American, German, French, etc. The library therefore has on its shelves not only books in Portuguese, but also in French, German, English and Spanish."

Root of Brazil's evils

THE central branch of the *Biblioteca Infantil* first opened its doors in 1936 with a small reference and lending section in a small building. This has now been replaced by the modern two-storey structure offering all facilities and the Children's Theatre alongside it now stands on the site of the old children's library. With each book borrowed, a small card is added on which children are asked to answer four questions, describing what they read, how they liked the book, which character they liked most, and why. This, says Dona Lenira, not only helps the library to determine the most popular books in a given period and to gauge differences in children's reading taste, but also to sharpen the youngster's interest in what they are reading.

In a country like Brazil, where literacy is a serious problem which the government has been fighting to overcome for years, Dona Lenira sees the children's library as one of the best ways of ultimately solving the problem by interesting the very young in the pleasures as well as the benefits that come from reading and general cultural development.

Her work has been inspired by a statement made by Monteiro Lobato, the greatest writer of children's books in Brazil, who once said : "The day when every city in Brazil has its children's library, Brazil will be safe from all evil. For all the evils of Brazil have one single cause : ignorance; the ignorance of adults who were never inspired with a love of reading when they were children."

Ever since she heard Monteiro Lobato utter this phrase, Lenira Fraccaroli has repeated it again and again in her speeches and writings to win local and government support for the children's library movement.

Yellow Woodpecker Farm

LIKE many Brazilians, Dona Lenira sees in Monteiro Lobato the "Himalaya" of her country's children's literature. His stories of Little Pug Nose, Viscount of Corncob, Emilia, the talking rag doll, and Mammy Nastacia on "Yellow Woodpecker Farm" have delighted millions of Brazilian children for many years. His works would probably delight many more millions in other countries if they were translated into other languages. Unfortunately his name is almost completely unknown abroad. Despite this, Dona Fraccaroli believes that the day will come when Monteiro Lobato's "Woodpecker Farm" characters will be known and loved by children in every corner of the globe and that "he will rank as one of the greatest authors of children's books in the world."

Although Brazil can today boast a number of other first-rate writers of children's books, the need for more good books in this field is still great. This was well brought out at a Unesco seminar on the development of public libraries in Latin America held in Sao Paulo in 1951.

A section of this seminar, headed by Lenira Fraccaroli, was devoted to children's libraries. Surveying the book production picture in all the Latin American Republics, it revealed that little was being done in most of them. Brazil, Argentina and Mexico lead in the publication of children's books but a much greater effort is still needed in all the countries. The seminar called for the co-operation of writers, publishers, librarians, teachers, illustrators and book trade organizations "to increase and improve the production of books and magazines for children and adolescents."

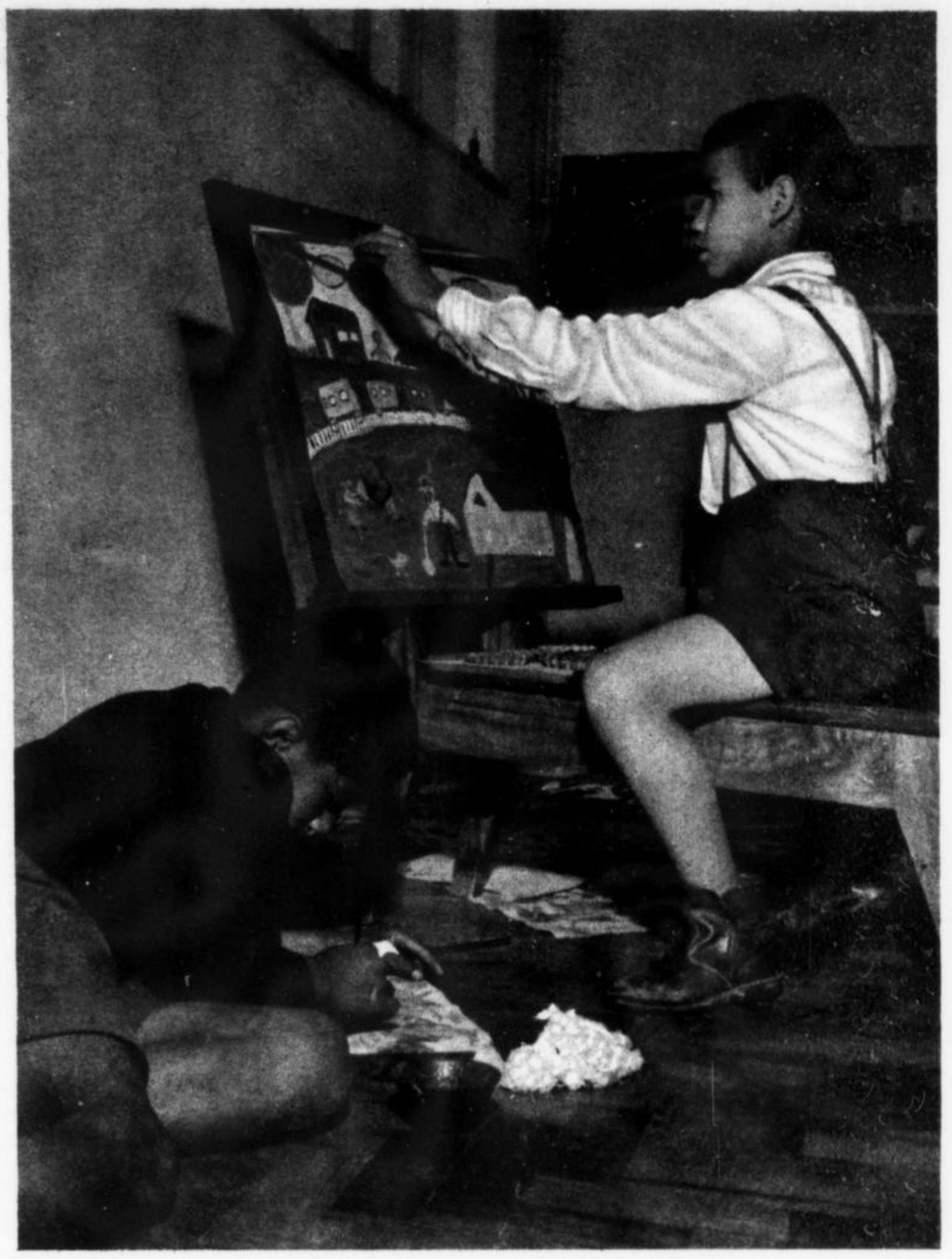
Since then, Lenira Fraccaroli and many of her colleagues in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Pernambuco and other parts of Brazil, have been campaigning on a four-point platform for more children's writers, more children's books, more children's libraries and more training courses for children's librarians.

Last July, under the auspices of the young editorial staff of the *Biblioteca Infantil's* newspaper, "A Voz da Infancia" (Youth's Voice), Dona Lenira organized a Congress of Children's Writers at which some 20 authors—some of them outstanding in their field—as well as 150 adolescents from different regions of Brazil attended. They discussed ways to provide better books for children, how to eliminate pulp publications and increase the circulation of better books and magazines, and asked for increased government and local support for the establishment of children's libraries in all of the cities of Brazil.

A children's library in every city of Brazil, however is probably still a long long way off. But the Sao Paulo *Biblioteca Infantil* is pointing the way. In Bahia to the north, a children's library "Monteiro Lobato" resembling the main branch on the Rua General Jardim, was recently inaugurated after a Bahian librarian had spent two months studying the Sao Paulo installations and techniques. Other children's libraries along similar lines are also planned for the city.

In Rio de Janeiro, where until recently a single room for children was attached to the existing public libraries, the Chamber of Deputies is now considering a project for the creation of 10 children's libraries in separate buildings. The coffee city of Santos is completing two ultra-modern structures equipped with open-air reading terraces, arts and crafts facilities, a cinema and a children's theatre. In these and other cities special courses to train library staff have been organized and library courses are now planned as a regular part of all normal schools as a means of stimulating the creation of children's libraries throughout Brazil.

All in all, it looks as if the *Biblioteca Infantil* of Sao Paulo has reallv started something. With its accent on combined libraries and play centres where children have found delight and inspiration through access both to books and creative activities, with its five branch libraries and two children's theatres already in operation, with its 20 new children's libraries now planned or under construction, the *Biblioteca Infantil* of Sao Paulo stands as a brilliant and inspiring example for the rest of Brazil and for other countries elsewhere in the world.



Finishing touch to a left-handed job. Complete freedom of expression is allowed youngsters in the creative arts. Children are also offered regular courses in the history of art accompanied by reproductions of the great masters.

in July 1952, the Children's Library of Sao Paulo convened a Congress of Brazilian children's writers. Here youngsters take part in a lively discussion on the need for more children's libraries and more writers of children's books.

Sorry, Mozart is out on loan

by A. J. Branston

AN ingenious suggestion by a librarian in Britain's Walthamstow Public Library a few years ago has given joy and inspiration to tens of thousands of British music lovers, who had hitherto been sharply restricted in their choice of music.

The idea — that gramophone records should be made available on free loan from public libraries in the same way that books are lent to borrowers — has spread so rapidly that nearly all the larger public libraries in Britain's cities now have a record library.

The City Librarian at Westminster Public Library, in the heart of London was one of the first to organize a record library for his public. But neither he nor his staff anticipated the result. Opening in August 1948, within a week every one of the 5,000 records in the newly-acquired stock was " out on loan " and newcomers had nothing from which to make a selection.

So popular has the idea proved itself that, today, Westminster has over 11,000 records and some 4,000 regular borrowers, and both numbers are growing larger week by week. On an average 100 people a day visit the record library, taking away with them as many as six records each.

Providing they fulfil one of two special conditions, anybody may borrow records from these public record libraries. These conditions are that the borrower must *either* reside or work within the boundaries of the borough concerned. Young people (under 21) and residents who are not rate-payers are usually asked to obtain a guarantor's signature on their membership-proposal card, but some libraries dispense even with this precaution.

Operation of the scheme proved to be less expensive than had been feared. Westminster Public Library puts its expenses thus : cost of 5,000 new records £2,000 ($5,600) ; boxes and covers for the records £75 ($210) ; annual catalogue (printed) about £350 ($980) ; annual replacements; records £1,650 ($4,620), boxes, covers and stationery £100 ($280). Though some additional staff was required to help to run the record library, no extra space was needed.

For comparison purposes the expenses of the record library at Lewisham (believed to be Britain's second largest) may be given. The initial cost, including additional furniture, 1,000 records, covers, stationery, etc., was about £1,000 ($2,800). An annual grant of £1,000 is made to cover replacements, new records and so on. Except during rush periods, only one person is needed to run the record library, doing all the clerical work, renewing covers, indexing and cataloguing new records and so on.

It is an obvious necessity, of course, that borrowers should take care of their records and see that they are returned undamaged. Some librarians foresaw a great deal of carelessness with records on loan. They expected to find that returned records would be badly scratched, chipped or cracked, while some borrowers, they thought, would either keep the records or sell them!

Astonishingly, none of these things happened except to a very minor degree. Music lovers, it was found, almost invariably handle the records with loving care.

Occasionally, of course, a record is damaged, and the borrower is asked to pay a fine according to the extent of the damage. For a slight scratch or chip, the fine is one shilling ($0.14).

To some observers, this ever-increasing demand for music by peoples of all classes is all the more extraordinary because it is all for classical music. No jazz or swing, none of the latest " hot " numbers, or even what is commonly known as " light popular music ", is included. But all the major forms — operas, ballet music, symphonies, concertos, chamber music — are available. young folk, to sit and listen to the world's finest music — free.

Humanity's need for good music has been so universally recognized that no

Many record libraries give weekly or monthly recitals, using their own records. To these come elderly people as well as opposition has been expressed against the idea of music as a free public service.

THE BOOKMOBILE COMES TO TOWN

by Gladys Skelley

I WAS very lucky one year when I taught in a rural school in Iowa. Not far away was a town library, and every two weeks I trudged back and forth with a big armload of books for my pupils. The other six years of my teaching in country schools neither I nor my pupils were so fortunate. No library was within reach of horse and buggy or Model T, and we had to be content with the dog-eared, age-yellowed reading material that youngsters had read for several generations. It was indeed a red-letter day when funds from a money box social added new books to the school "library".

That was twenty-odd years ago. Memories of those days came back poignantly to me not long ago when I took a one-day trip in a bookmobile in Woodford County, Illinois.

I met the librarian — whom all the children call the Bookmobile *Lady* — and the driver at Metamora, the headquarters of the Illinois Prairie District Library. They told me that the working book collection of the district is more than 35,000 volumes. In the bookmobile we had 4,000 books from which youngsters and adults could select reading for one month.

This bookmobile visits twenty-one schools, thirteen of which are one-room schools. The teacher receives a notice of a visit one week in advance. Then the children start their anxious wait for the day, which they encircle in red on their big schoolroom calendar.

As we journeyed over the country roads to the six one-room schools we were to visit on that first day of bookmobile trips for the school year, I learned how this library district was established.

Teachers and principals, the local banker, a former school-teacher, a local clergyman, and farm folk in the area saw the need for bringing public-library service to Woodford County.

Seven townships of the county were vitally interested in the demonstration service that the Illinois State library provided. They held an election and formed the Illinois Prairie District Library. The bookmobile is on loan from the Illinois State Library. Within a few years the district will purchase its own bookmobile, and build up its own collection of library materials, supplemented by State library material.

The district finances the library by a maximum library tax of six cents on every $100 of assessed property valuation.

Five collections of books, besides the one at Metamora, are maintained in the district. These branch libraries have collections of different sizes, depending on the number of book borrowers in the community. Before the formation of the district library, there was only one small library in the seventownship area. It is now co-operating with the district library.

Usually each pupil or adult borrows six books a month. He is responsible for their return. The youngsters' books are placed on a school bookshelf for use by all the pupils.

That shelf of books holds a variety of interests, too, as the year swings into its seasons. In spring, it's bird and flower books, so the children can identify the birds and flowers they see on the way to school. During the winter there are volumes on games to play indoors, things to make for parents for Christmas, or books on plays and "pieces", to help out on the school programme. Maybe it's a book about how to identify the different animal tracks for the hunters in the group. The teacher can be expected to ask for just about anything which will help her in her daily work.

The bookmobile librarian also drives a jeep, which carries a thousand books. Those she takes to sections of three nearby counties. They are serviced on contract by the Illinois Prairie District Library.

After travelling in the bookmobile for some miles, we came to our first stop of the day. It was an honest-to-goodness one-room, little red schoolhouse. There was a royal welcome there, for, besides the youngsters who came bounding out to the bookmobile when it rolled into the yard, two mothers and their small children were on hand for the event.

The genial bookmobile driver immediately took a new job. He pulled down a table top from the wall, got library cards in order, and whirled his seat around. He was now the clerk for those book-hungry friends. He helped the youngsters, some of whom could only print their names, to fill in the library card which held them responsible for the books selected.

A busy woman was the Bookmobile Lady. Animal stories seemed popular for all ages. The tiny folk, with mouths open as they entered the bookmobile for the first time, asked their teacher or the Lady for stories about dogs, kitties, or cowboys. They had a hard time selecting books, for everything was so very wonderful to them — so many beautiful books in one little room!

The mothers, with tiny babies in their arms, chose several books about homemaking, cooking, and sewing. They also asked the Lady's advice on the newest books of fiction. The eagerness with which they took their books from the bookmobile revealed that they were as happy as the children because of the

THE REGULAR VISIT OF THE BOOKMOBILE IS AN EXCITING EVENT IN THE LIFE OF A TWO-ROOM COUNTRY SCHOOL. (Unesco photo)

bookmobile's visit to the neighbourhood.

At the second school we visited there were two circles around the date for the bookmobile visit. It was an extra-special event : the schoolhouse is located on a road that is almost impassable in winter. Thus, the bookmobile makes only two visits — in spring and fall. The jeep delivers and collects the books at other times.

The Oak Dell school was our last stop for the morning. Here we ate our lunch on the school grounds with the pupils and their teacher. Between bites of food, they talked to their teacher and the Lady and driver about books they could get on the next trip. Before we left, the boys got the driver to pitch in their softball game.

At the first school in the afternoon, a man was waiting at the gate for us. He was a busy farmer, eager to borrow the new books in the travelling library. His enthusiasm was as great as the youngsters'.

"You got any books on railroading or poetry I haven't read?" he asked the Lady. They plunged into animated conversation on authors and railroads and writing. She had for him this time Robert Frost's *Collected Poems* and *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* by John and Alan Lomax. Next time she promised to bring Archie Robertson's *Slow Train to Yesterday*.

"This is a wonderful thing—this bookmobile," he remarked to the driver as he signed his card at the desk. A quiet, serious man, he realizes (I gathered from my talk with him) what treasures the bookmobile is bringing to his daily living and to the life of his community.

We stopped at a fourth school. There sixteen excited children came to the road to choose their books for the month. Some of the girls asked for "true stories," which they like so well—biographies of famous persons. They also enjoy the new teen-age romance stories, mysteries, and "funny" stories, as do all the girls on the bookmobile route. Boys from fourth grade up enjoy sports, mystery and cowboy stories and science fiction.

Our last visit of the day was to the largest school on the route. The older children came out to the bookmobile first. They selected their books in orderly fashion. Then the little folk came with their teacher and hovered around her in expectancy and wonder; a new, strange, wonderful experience was unfolding for them. As I watched these children it struck me with force; you cannot measure the value of the bookmobile in dollars and cents, any more than you can so measure the value of a new scientific discovery, or a new system of philosophy, or the life of a good man and a good woman. These good, new, attractive, interesting books that these little ones were picking out for the first time and these eager, smart minds—they would fuse, strike fire, open a new vista, and bring deeper ambition and awareness of life and people.

How I wished my pupils in my rural Iowa schools could have had a bookmobile — that all schoolchildren could have them!

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'The Wonderful World of Books'

"READING," said the American writer and publisher Bennett Cerf, "is like eating peanuts: once you begin you tend to go on and on." But many people are apparently missing the rich rewards and pleasures that come from a good bite into the "peanut bag."

Recent statistics show that while practically every adult American listens to the radio at least 15 minutes a day, and about 80 or 90 per cent read newspapers more or less regularly, half the population of the United States does not read even one book a year. Less than 25 per cent read a book a month.

With figures such as these before them, a hundred or so librarians, teachers, writers, publishers, editors and booksellers came together at a symposium in Washington, D.C. in 1951, to talk about reading, and after talking, to do something to encourage more people to read. One of the important things they did was inspire the publication of a volume, just published, entitled "The Wonderful World of Books."

Dedicated "to those who bend twigs — the librarians of America, teachers, extension workers, leaders — and to the twigs themselves," the new book offers a delightfully varied and helpful guide to the joys and benefits of reading. "Books as Friends," "The Pleasures of Reading," "Reading Among Friends," "Reading More Effectively," "Books Look Upward," "Reading for Citizens," "Toward Better Horizons," "Choosing and Using Books," "Writers and Publishers," "Books for Every-one," are some of the chapter headings in the volume of 72 essays edited by Alfred Stefferud.

The role of public libraries is considered from many aspects in a section titled "Libraries Are for You." Starting from a historical survey of the growth of libraries from American Colonial times, and especially since the American Library Association began its activities three-quarters of a century ago, "The Wonderful World of Books" shows readers of all ages and interests how they can use libraries more effectively and how libraries can serve the public better.

The book offers practical suggestions to those who would like to read more but who do not because "of lack of time," and gives the librarian, the teacher and group leaders an important tool for encouraging and directing better reading among those with whom they work.

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LE PARISIEN LIKES TRAVEL BOOKS *LA PARISIENNE* PREFERS BIOGRAPHIES

LOOK in the guidebook to Paris and among the monuments and public buildings you will find listed the city's famous libraries : celebrated names like the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, the *Sainte-Geneviève*, the *Mazarine*, the *Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal*.

But these are not the libraries of the people of Paris. They are mostly reference libraries from which books can only be borrowed on rare occasions by specialists, research workers and students. The gas company employee and the typist, the bank messenger and the mechanic, the young worker and his romantically inclined sister, therefore, do not go to these places to borrow books. These people, the average readers, never need to go any further than the local library in their *arrondissement* to find the books they need.

Despite appearances, no large city is a single, massive entity of people and buildings. To the people who live there it often becomes a nation whose provinces are the neighbourhoods in which they dwell. And though the city has its illustrious institutions these are not always as alive and as close to the people as the more humble ones: the parish church, the local cinema, the grocer's shop on the corner. It is into this category of accepted, familiar institutions that the local branch library fits.

A century ago people had to do without them, for as late as the year 1866 Paris possessed only one municipal library. Then with the development of compulsory primary education, the situation began to change. By 1882, each of the twenty Paris districts had its library, and today the city has a total of seventy-seven.

A family affair

THEY are modest places these seventy-seven libraries. Generally they are housed in the local town hall or in schools where accommodation is limited because of the need to make room for an ever-increasing school age population. So, because they cannot accommodate many readers within their premises, most of them function primarily as lending libraries.

Their share of the municipal budget does not allow the librarians to purchase all the modern equipment they would like to see installed, but has to be used to meet the basic need of book buying. Even so the budget is now reaching encouraging proportions, having risen from about £22,000 in 1950 to £40,000 for the current year.

What sort of books make up the total collection of 769,000 volumes on the shelves of the Paris libraries? As might be expected, a high proportion are either French classical or modern novels or translations of foreign ones. But historical works make up 21.2% of the total and, not counting works of fiction, books on literature and philology represent 13.3%. The remaining books are devoted to geography, the fine arts, the social sciences, philosophy, religion and to musical scores.

Last year, for example, 2,929.000 books were given out on loan and more than 25,000 new borrowers were registered in the various districts.

While the people of Paris who use the libraries come from every age group, it was especially noted that the proportion of young people who take out books is becoming greater and greater. Interesting, too, were the figures recorded last year in terms of the occupations followed by library users. Employees and officials of various sorts made up 21% of the total : students, 17%; schoolchildren and apprentices, 14%; those with no occupation (chiefly women), 13%; workers and craftsmen, 11.5%; primary and secondary school teachers, 6%; professional people (lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.) 3 %; tradesmen, 4.7%.

A really important fact recorded was that the majority of these readers made regular visits to the library and, on the average, read between one and three books each week. It was also noticed that not only the card holder, but all the members of a family made use of the books that were borrowed.

Best sellers

CONTRARY, to what one might expect it is not always the best selling novel that meets the greatest popularity among book borrowers. According to a report recently published in the "Official Municipal Bulletin of the City of Paris", sixty per cent of the people who take out novels like to borrow at the same time serious non-fiction on a subject which particularly interests them or on topical questions.

Choice, by the way, is not just a haphazard affair. Many people are strongly influenced by the opinions of literary critics whose articles they read in their daily papers or magazines. Similarly the radio and the cinema are also having their effect. As soon as a book, no matter what kind it may be, has been made into a film, it is immediately in great demand.

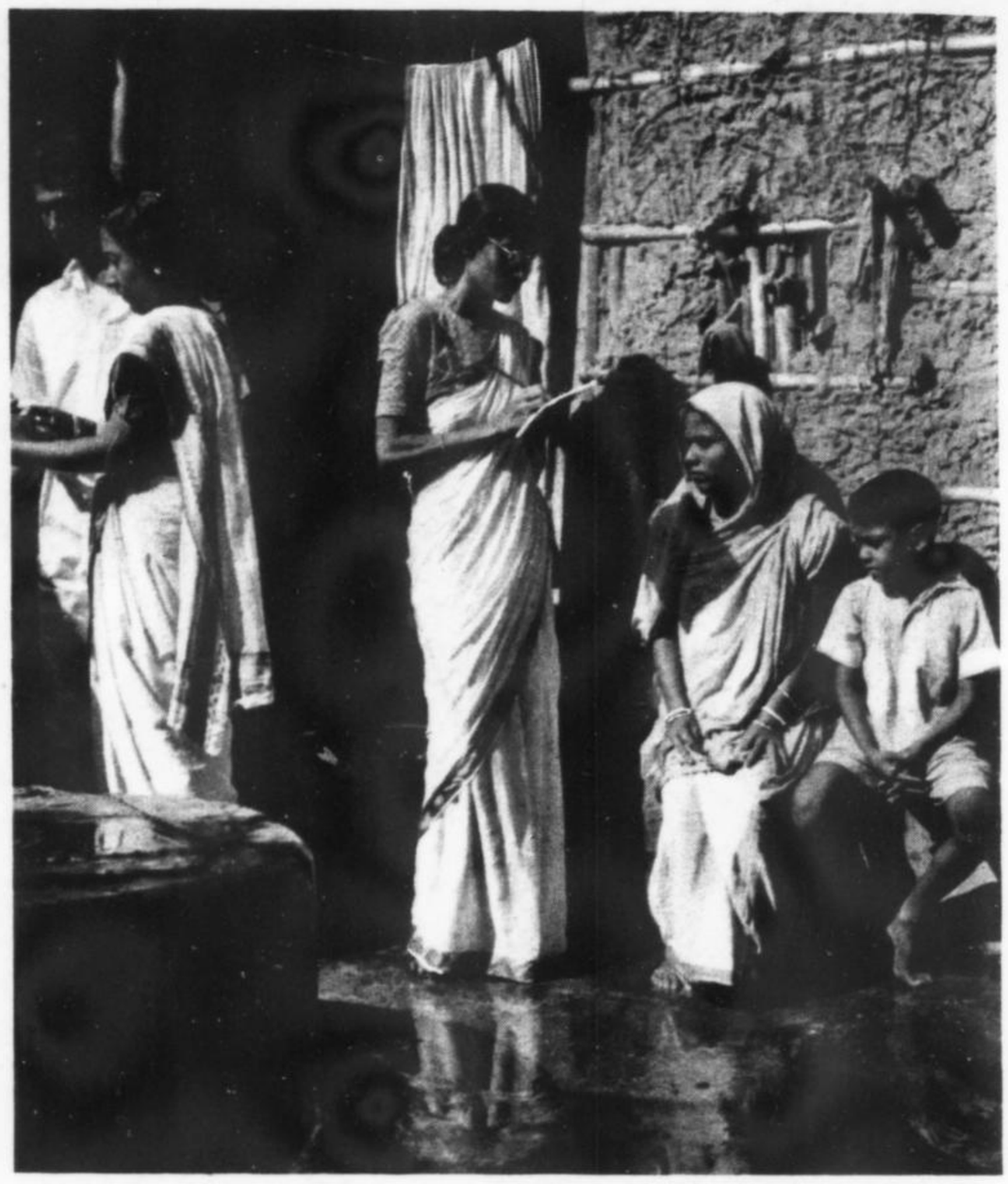
Libraries have to exercise a great variety of choice in their book purchases so as to meet the extremely diverse requests for works of a general cultural character. Men, for instance, are attracted by books on travel, by scientific and technical works and those dealing with contemporary history. Women show a predilection for plays, biographies and poetry. Books on philosophy and the social sciences are especially popular with young people while biographies and historical works are sought after by elderly persons.

A book a year

UNFORTUNATELY, say the librarians, echoed by educationists, neither the present facilities offered by libraries nor the use made of them is satisfactory. Paris, a city of over four million inhabitants, needs more than seventy-seven libraries. To be satisfied with the present achievements would be to admit that each Parisian only needs to read one book each year.

There are, of course, many people who buy books. But the important point to remember is that those who visit local libraries are, in the main, people who cannot afford to buy the books they need. Therefore, the figure which counts is the one which shows the number of volumes loaned by the municipal libraries — three million; three million books which had it not been for the libraries would not have been made use of.

When library officials approach the city authorities for funds to expand the existing Parisian libraries they might well use as a justification the words of the French statesman who organized the country's educational system. "One may do everything for the primary school, for the secondary school and for the university," said Jules Ferry, "but if, after all this, there are no libraries, nothing will have been achieved."



The narrow street, in the heart of Bombay, had no lighting, no sidewalks.

THE narrow street, deep in the heart of the slums of Bombay, had no lighting, no sidewalks, and its dusty surface did not make a comfortable resting-place. It was far from one's conception of a suitable classroom. Nevertheless, a few yards from where our car stopped, a class was in progress. By the flickering light of kerosene lamps, about twenty adults were painfully learning to read and write their own language. Each had a small primer and a notebook in which to write down the symbols the teacher outlined on the blackboard, and that about summed up the equipment.

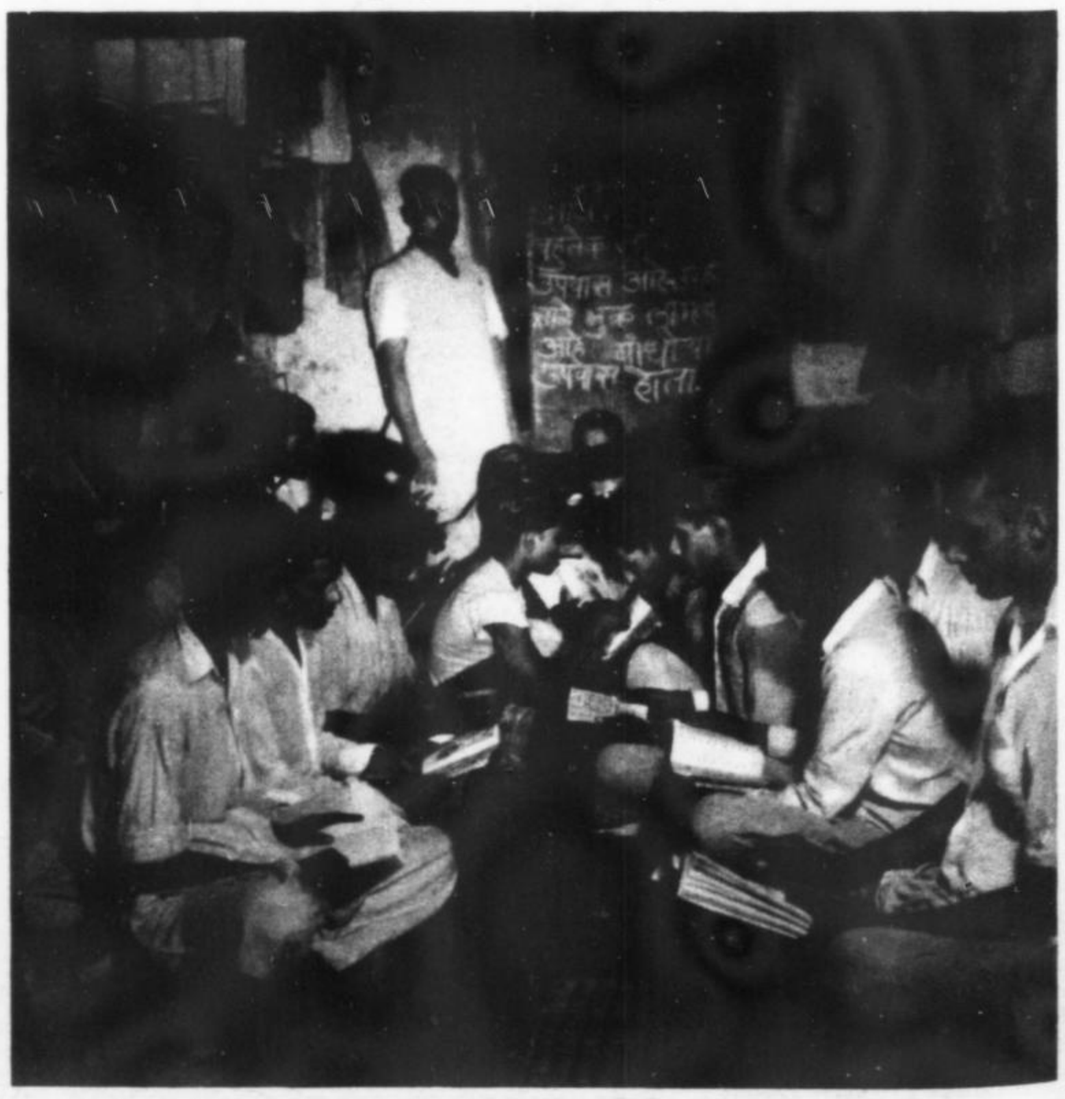
This class was typical of the many organized by the Bombay Social Education Department. Every night at least a hundred such classes are being held in the street, in unused shops, in trade union halls, in schools, in temple courtyards. It is a principle that the class must be held near where a group lives, and that the accommodation must be free, so that where none is available the class is held in the street.

In a two-day tour, I saw many facets of the work of the Bombay Social Education Department—communal radio sets and loudspeakers, film vans for the showing of films on health, hygiene, and similar subjects, a superb display of gymnastics presented by one of the athletic clubs, but always the emphasis was on the problem of overcoming illiteracy.

My own personal interest was in one particular aspect of the problem — the provision of public libraries and the use of books. As Unesco Consultant to Delhi Public Library, I had come to see what was being done to help the illiterate use this new-found knowledge and increase it by practice. It is not difficult, given the right methods, to teach an adult to read and write. But what comes after? What facilities should there be to enable him to progress further? The Bombay Committee was trying to help by providing boxes of books at Social Education Centres. But book boxes are not libraries, and a complete public library system for Bombay appeared to be very far in the future.

Later, I had the opportunity to see something of the rural problem when I was invited by the State of Madhya

A few yards from where our car stopped, a class was in progress. By the flickering light of kerosene lamps about twenty adults were painfully learning to read and write their own language. (Photo: Bombay Social Education Committee.)



A SIKH TAXI DRIVER DISCOVERS THE ROAD TO THE LIBRARY

by Frank M. Gardner

Bharat, in Central India, to tour the province and report on the possibility of an integrated public library service. Madhya Bharat is a compound of several Princely States, with a population of over nine million people, and an area of some 30,000 square miles. It has three large towns, Gwalior, Indore, Ujjain (one of the holy cities of India), several small ones, and innumerable villages. Like all Indian States, it has many problems. Roads, education, public health services, agriculture, irrigation —all need improvement, and that Madhya Bharat should be thinking of library services at all showed some courage and vision. But someone had realized that literacy and libraries went together, and the Rural Development Service had the establishment of village libraries in its programme. Sometimes it provides a box of books. Sometimes, it supplements existing libraries.

A small beginning

WE saw one such library at Bhitarwar, a typical enough Indian village, more prosperous than most perhaps, for it lies in an irrigated area suited to sugar cane, and it has a pleasant school, a dispensary, and, accidently, some claims to the picturesque. It lies on a bend of a river, and on the far side the ruins of a fort command the plain from an outcrop of rock. India is littered with such ruins. The forts and tombs and temples decay, but the villages remain. In a sacred pool of the river by the Panchayat House huge fish swim in contented immunity.

Greeted, garlanded, and refreshed with sweet milky tea, nuts and fruit, we entered the Panchayat House and mounted a narrow stair. Here, in a small room about 12 feet by 12, was the village library. Some 500 books, neatly classified, and very clean. I made enquiries about use, and about other books in the village. Of a population of 1,600 some 200 people used the library from time to time. One or two people had a few books of their own. The schoolmaster had several. Two or three people subscribed to newspapers. There was only one radio set in the village. Here, in this small room was the centre of culture in the village, it was evident that the village council was very proud of it. They had founded it, levied a tax to pay for it, and now it was to be enlarged as a library for other villages in the area.

It was, of course, a very small beginning. Bhitarwar is the centre of a Kendra Panchayat, or rural council, of about 100 square miles, consisting of 70 villages and over 30,000 people. Would the movement thus started spread, or would it falter for lack of funds, until the ideals became a memory, and the clean books a pile of tattered rubbish?

Such daunting thoughts were inspired by inspection of many libraries in India, and by knowledge of the previous history of the Public Library movement.

" Gentlemen's club "

THERE have been Public Libraries in India for almost as long as there has been Indian civilization, and particularly in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Public Libraries were founded in most Indian cities. But they were libraries founded as memorials, or cultural efforts by social service or charitable foundations, and Western experience has shown that the Public Library can only flourish with sustained and communal assistance—a basis of taxation rather than subscription or donation.

In India, the legislative basis has always been lacking, and as a result much effort has gone to waste. I saw in India many libraries, good in conception, inspired by high ideals, that had become almost derelict through lack of continuous support, or were eking out a precarious existence by subscription and donation. In one large Indian city, a most commodious building housed an almost valueless collection of books, and was used by a hundred or so elderly gentlemen for its periodicals and newspapers. It may have been a quite pleasant gentleman's club, but its original function as a public library had disappeared.

In another city, two public libraries existed within two hundred yards of each other, one supported partially by government grant, the other by a social service group, with little or no co-operation. In one of the largest cities of India, a most beautiful building bearing a famous name, has become an almost derelict library through lack of financial support. Its shelves are crammed with 19th century classics, with a number of rarities, but classification and cataloguing are rudimentary, readers are almost non-existent, and not only is there no money for new books, but the salary of the librarian is usually in arrear.

The problem is not entirely a financial one. In terms of use, it is actually more expensive to maintain a poor library than a good one. Invariably, judging any library by the rough and ready criterion of annual cost per member, I found that the cost was higher than similar cost in England for a far superior service.

To sit in a bus or tram one day and see a man in front, a very ordinary-looking fellow, pull a book from his pocket...

One is brought sharply to the conclusion by this object lesson that the public library can only fulfil its function as an instrument of culture and education if it is organized on the basis of support from taxation, free and unrestricted membership, and access to the shelves. The librarian of a library supported by subscription looks on himself as a custodian rather than an interpreter, and comes to look on use as leading to theft. Locked bookcases and public libraries are a contradiction in terms.

There is no lack of realization of these facts in Indian librarianship. A growing movement is agitating for library legislation and modern libraries, and is making progress.

To provide a focus for this growing interest, the foundation of the Delhi Public Library in 1951 as a demonstration project under the joint auspices of Unesco and the Indian Government was most opportune, and its immediate and tremendous success has shown that the conception of the modern public library is eageriy grasped by the Indian public. The first director on behalf of Unesco was Edward Sydney, well-known for his work in furthering the wider purposes of libraries, and he did the foundation work on the project. I acted as Unesco Consultant from the opening of the library to its firm and flourishing state in the middle of 1952. Since then progress has been continuous.

In two years, a complete modern library service has been established, with adult lending library, reading rooms, children's library, and extension department for lectures, discussions, and film shows. A mobile library for outlying districts is nearing completion, and with the co-operation of the Ministry of Rehabilitation, branches in the new housing colonies for refugees are being established. And to aid in the conquest of illiteracy, small collections in Social Education Centres are maintained, and close contact between the two departments ensures that new-literates are properly introduced to the public library.

It has been a remarkable experiment, and even more remarkable has been the response of the public. In the first year that the library has been open, it has registered over 14,000 members, loaned over 180,000 books, and recorded 580,000 attendances. From the children's library —one of the few actually lending books to children for home reading in India—200 books a day are issued, and extension is only hampered by the great difficulty in finding suitable books in Hindi for children. In the extension department, self-governing groups sprang up with very little nursing, covering theatre, music, debating, music, Hindi literature, and a group for old people. Lectures sponsored by the library were always crowded, and film shows had to be run in triplicate to accommodate the crowds.

Accustomed to unresponsive lecture audiences, I was surprised to see large crowds for severely factual talks on Indian affairs, and even more to hear the knowledgeable questions showered on the speaker at the end. It was also pleasant to see the readiness of eminent men to come and talk to the public and the immediate contact they made with an audience. Democracy in India may be new, but it is a vigorous, man to man affair

The Delhi Library has emphasized the existence of a very obvious need, and it is well-used not only in numbers but in quality. Most of the stock is in Hindi, and much of it is elementary and crude, but the proportion of purely recreative reading is no higher than in the West, despite a generally lower educational standard. For contemplative reading, philosophy, religion, sociology, the demand is much higher. For practical reading—books on engineering, radio, carpentry, recreations—it was impossible to gauge the demand, because there were few if any books available. The English bookstock must remedy any deficiencies in technical books, and this was deliberately limited at first, since the library was intended primarily for the ordinary reader. The Indian Public Library has a double role—it must not only provide books, it must encourage their production.

Chester Bowles has said wisely that India is not a poor country, it is a country with many poor people. In the pressing problem of developing Indian resources, where does a Public Library fit in? How far is it worthwhile compared with the demand of health, agriculture, industrial production? The most obvious answer is that all progress depends on a literate, socially conscious community. New ideas cannot be accepted unless understood, new techniques practised unless learned.

The Delhi Public Library is a small beginning, though it is on the way, if allowed to develop, to providing an adequate library service for the people of Delhi. But that was not the object behind its foundation. To succeed, it must act as a pilot for the creation of similar services in other parts of India, backed by legislation and taxation. Beyond India lies South-East Asia, with many countries facing the same problems. The Delhi Public Library can bring the conception of Public Library service in a practical way, as no text-book ever could. Next year, when Unesco's participation in the project ends, assessment will be made of what has been so far achieved, and a seminar may be held attended by librarians and educationists from India and other countries. In showing how a library should open its doors and its shelves to all, Unesco has started a whole series of new ideas.

In my stay in Delhi, I had some frustrations but many heart-warming experiences. To sit in a bus one day and see a man on the seat in front, and a very ordinary-looking fellow, pull a book from his pocket clearly marked "Delhi Public Library"; to see an older boy laboriously translating an English picture book for the benefit of a younger one; to see a bearded Sikh taxi-driver studying a book on motor engineering—little events such as these, and every day one can see something new—prove that here is a practical experiment eagerly accepted and approved by the people.

THEY SPENT THEIR SUMMER VACATION IN A LIBRARY

The Municipal Library of Valognes, a small town in Normandy, was one of many similar institutions which suffered damage through the war (total library war losses in France have been estimated at more than $6,000,000). Until three years ago it remained in the same condition in which a near miss from a bomb had left it in 1944—floors and bookshelves covered with plaster and rubble; its books, many of them valuable medieval manuscripts and incunabula, littering the floors.

Then, in April 1950, its sad state came to the notice of Unesco which issued an appeal asking for a team of volunteers to come and work at Valognes to save the library's valuable collection of books from further damage and decay. Soon the Danish International Student Committee, "Interstud", offered to send a team of 35 Danish and Swedish student volunteers, and a few weeks later this team, accompanied by two book-binders, arrived from Copenhagen and set to work with a will. Some students repaired torn and damaged volumes, cleaned those in good condition (photo above) and treated the leather and parchment bindings with special soaps and preservatives. Others scoured the emptied shelves, coated them with wax and made paper covers for the books. The young Swedes and Danes spent their summer vacations on this task and when they left Valognes, order and cleanliness had been restored to one of the richest of France's small provincial libraries. Their efforts brought to light many precious works dating from the 1400's and 1500's. Similar efforts to help restore other war-damaged libraries in France have also been made by students from Great Britain. Groups of them came over and did valuable work in libraries at Dunkirk and Strasbourg.